

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O 231404Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9884

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 0612

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON

C O R R E C T E D COPY - TEXT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IS, EAID

SUBJECT: FY-77 ASSISTANCE PLANNING FIGURES FOR ISRAEL

REF STATE 16396

1. CHARGE, ACCOMPANIED BY E/C COUNSELOR, PASSED PLANNING FIGURES FOR FY-77 ASSISTANCE TO FINANCE MINISTER RABINOWITZ AND DIRECTOR GENERAL GAFNI JAN 23, DRAWING ON TALKING POINTS IN PARA 4 REFTEL. HE CONCLUDED PRESENTATION WITH REQUEST THAT FIGURES BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL THEIR SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS TAKE PLACE.

2. RABINOWITZ SAID HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR BEING INFORMED OF PRESIDENT'S DECISION. REDUCTION IN ANTICIPATED MILITARY ASSISTANCE BY \$500 MILLION, HOWEVER, WOULD POSE VERY DIFFICULT PROBLEMS IN VIEW ANNUAL BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT OF ABOUT \$4 BILLION. FINANCING OF THIS DEFICIT WOULD BE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT IF "FIFTH QUARTER" OF THIS YEAR MUST BE SUMSUMED IN FY-77 PACKAGE. HE FELT THAT PRIME MINISTER RABIN WOULD WISH TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT NEXT WEEK IN WASHINGTON.

3. ON QUESTION OF PRESS SPECULATION, RABINOWITZ NOTED
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THAT FMS FIGURE FOR FY-77 HAD ALREADY APPEARED IN PRESS

AND RADIO, APPARENTLY BASED ON REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON.
HOWEVER, HE HIMSELF WOULD NOT RELEASE ANYTHING TO PRESS.

4. COMMENT: RABINOWITZ GAVE IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS AWARE
OF FMS FIGURE BUT SURPRISED BY DECISION TO INCLUDE FIFTH
QUARTER IN Y-77 FIGURES. HE APPARENTLY HAD NOT RECEIVED
REPORT FROM DINITZ ON HIS CONVERSATION WITH YOU.
IN ANY EVENT, RABIN CAN BE EXPECTED TO HAMMER HARD ON BOTH
FMS AND FIFTH QUARTER QUESTION. PRESS HAS REPORTED FY-77
FMS AT \$1 BILLION, WITH TOTAL ASSISTANCE RANGING FROM
\$1.6 BILLION TO \$1.9 BILLION. FOR EXAMPLE, HAARETZ
WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT MARGALIT REPORTED JAN 23 THAT
QUOTE FROM AID FOR 1976 THEY CUT OFF AMOUNTS OF \$15 MILLION
EVERY FEW WEEKS. IN 1977 ISRAEL WILL BE OFFERED AID TO
TUNE OF \$1.6 BILLION ONLY, OF WHICH \$1 BILLION WILL BE EAR-
MARKED FOR MILITARY AID. THE AMERICANS BELIEVE THAT IF THEY
RAISE THAT AMOUNT ONLY A LITTLE, THE PROBLEM WILL BE
SOLVED, BECAUSE ISRAEL IS PREPARED 'TO SWALLOW' THE CUTS.
UNQUOTE.
DUNNIGAN

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